DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 424 335 UD 032 598

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TITLE	Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United States.
INSTITUTION	Russell Sage Foundation, New York, NY.
ISBN	ISBN-0-87154-994-8
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	270p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Russell Sage Foundation, 112 East 64th Street, New York, NY 10021 ($34.95).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; *Acculturation; *Adjustment (to Environment); Cultural Background; Cultural Differences; Disadvantaged Youth; *High School Students; High Schools; *Immigrants; Immigration; *Refugees; Student Attitudes; Tables (Data); Vietnamese; *Vietnamese People

ABSTRACT

This book tells the story of America's single largest group of refugee children, the children of Vietnamese refugees, as they have experienced growing up in the United States. Although a significant minority of these children lags behind, for the most part Vietnamese children's school success suggests that ethnic progress depends on more than the human and financial capital with which the immigrant parents begin. The book relies mainly on a case study of Versailles Village, a low-income urban minority community in New Orleans (Louisiana), the second-largest Vietnamese community outside California. Surveys in 1993 (n=198) and 1994 (n=404) focused on Vietnamese high school students in this community. Chapter 1, "The Scatterings of War," traces the historical progress of Vietnamese resettlement. Chapter 2, "Resettlement," describes the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Vietnamese population in the United States. Chapter 3, "The Reconstruction of the Ethnic Community and the Refugee Family," shows the ethnic community and the family as sources of social capital, and chapter 4, "Networks of Social Relations: Support and Control," describes patterns of social and kinship relations in the Vietnamese social system. Chapter 5, "Language and Adaptation," considers the issue of parental native language. Chapter 6, "Experiences in Adaptation to American Schools," explores school adaptation among Vietnamese students. Bicultural conflict and the issues of gender role changes and ethnic identification encountered by young Vietnamese are discussed in chapter 7, "Straddling the Gap: Bicultural Conflicts and Gender Role Changes." Chapter 8, "Delinquency: Insiders and Outsiders," describes specific patterns of peer group association among Vietnamese children and examines how they may be affected by differential associations with peers. Chapter 9, "Conclusion: Contexts of Reception, Selective Americanization, and the Implications for the New Second Generation," summarizes the main findings of the study and discusses the implications of these findings for other groups. (Contains 13 figures, 42 tables, and 209 references.) (SLD)

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